



# NEWSLETTER

**SOUTH DAKOTA DEPARTMENT OF VETERANS AFFAIRS**

**SOUTH DAKOTA DEPARTMENT OF THE MILITARY**



## GOVERNOR PROCLAIMS LANCE CARSON DAY IN SOUTH DAKOTA



Governor Daugaard proclaimed last Saturday "Lance Carson Day in South Dakota."

Most of us know Lance as Representative Carson from District 20, but many of us know him as a strong advocate for South Dakota's Veterans.

Each year during the Mitchell Corn Palace Stampede Rodeo, the committee honors veterans. This year they honored two special Vietnam Veterans—Chuck Gibson and Lance Carson. Both men not only donned the uniform and served their country, but they continue to serve and enhance the lives of our veterans for decades.

SDDVA Secretary Zimmerman was on hand for the ceremony and was pleased to present the Governor's proclamation.

"What an honor to help a community recognize and pay tribute to both of these outstanding heroes," said Secretary Zimmerman. "They served their country five decades ago and they continue to give back everyday. "South Dakota was founded with hard work, perseverance, dedication to duty, and concern for others, and each of these attributes can be ascribed to Lance," said Gov. Dennis Daugaard. "His loyalty and leadership has made him a cornerstone of this country and it is a privilege to honor his successes, his sacrifices, and his service."

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**"A hero is someone who has given his or her life to something bigger than oneself."**  
-Joseph Campbell



# **DOD ANNOUNCES POLICY CHANGE ON TRANSFER OF POST-9/11 GI BILL BENEFITS**

The Defense Department issued a substantive change today to its policy on the transfer by service members in the uniformed services of [Post-9/11 GI Bill](#) educational benefits to eligible family member recipients.

Effective one year from the date of this change, eligibility to transfer those benefits will be limited to service members with less than 16 years of total active-duty or selected reserve service, as applicable.

Previously, there were no restrictions on when a service member could transfer educational benefits to their family members. The provision that requires a service member to have at least six years of service to apply to transfer benefits remains unchanged in the policy.

"After a thorough review of the policy, we saw a need to focus on retention in a time of increased growth of the armed forces," said Stephanie Miller, director of accessions policy in the Office of the Secretary of Defense. "This change continues to allow career service members that earned this benefit to share it with their family

members while they continue to serve." This change is an important step to preserve the distinction of trans-

ferability as a retention incentive, she added.



U.S. DEPARTMENT OF DEFENSE

If service members fail to fulfill their service obligation because of a "force shaping" event -- such as officers involuntarily separated as a result of being twice passed over for promotion or enlisted personnel involuntarily separated as a result of failure to meet minimum retention standards, such as high year of tenure -- the change will allow them to retain their eligibility to transfer education benefits even if they haven't served the entirety of their obligated service commitment through no fault of their own.

All approvals for transferability of Post-9/11 GI Bill continue to require a four-year commitment in the armed forces and, more importantly, the member must be eligible to be retained for four years from the date of election, officials said.

The policy affects service members in the uniformed services, which includes the U.S. Coast Guard as well as the commissioned members of the U.S. Public Health Service and National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration.



# **SIOUX FALLS VA SHOW & SHINE**

**August 15, 2018, 5:30-8:00 PM**

**2501 W. 22<sup>nd</sup> Street**

**No registration or entrance fees. Dash plaques  
until gone. Open to all vehicles and bikes.**

email: [shirley.redmond@va.gov](mailto:shirley.redmond@va.gov) or [heather.parsons@va.gov](mailto:heather.parsons@va.gov) or

call 605-333-6888 or 605-336-3230, Ext. 9-6224

# **LEINENKUGEL TO LEAD VA COMMISSION ON VETERANS' MENTAL HEALTH TREATMENT**

The U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs (VA) announced that President Donald J. Trump has selected former VA White House Senior Advisor Thomas “Jake” Leinenkugel to lead a key commission focused on the department’s mental health care programs.

The Creating Options for Veterans' Expedited Recovery (COVER) commission will examine VA’s evidence-based therapy model for treating mental health conditions, as well as the department’s complementary and integrated mental health approaches.

“Jake has been an ambassador for change at VA, working to implement President Trump’s policies throughout the department over the past year and a half,” said Acting VA Secretary Peter O’Rourke. “As leader of this important new commission, Jake will continue to advocate for better care and services for his fellow veterans.”

A former captain in the U.S. Marine Corps, Leinenkugel joined VA in January 2017 after retiring in 2014 from his family-operated business, Jacob Leinenkugel Brewing Co., where he had served as president for 26 years.

At the VA, Leinenkugel has been instrumental in the creation of the department’s “ChooseVA” branding campaign and the implementation of November’s National Veterans and Military Families Month. He has also worked to promote VA’s efforts to reduce veteran suicides.

The COVER commission is scheduled to hold its first meeting July 24 and 25 in Washington, D.C.

# **PENNINGTON COUNTY VETERANS COURT GRADUATION**

Pennington County Veteran's Court celebrated their fourth graduation ceremony this week in Rapid City. For many veterans, acceptance into the Veterans Court programs saves them prison time and affords them an avenue to turn their life around. Acceptance into this program, veterans commit completely to the program and live by the rules set forth within the program to see it to completion.

In his remarks, Deputy Secretary Pollard noted that, “As veterans we learn about a set of values we are expected to live by and these values again come to play as veterans complete this program.”

Deputy Secretary Pollard commended the graduate on his accomplishments and encouraged him to continue to use the skills he has trained on to improve his life.

Special thanks to the Pennington County Veterans Service Office for the role they play in ensuring the successful outcome of the Veterans Court program.



# DOUGLAS COUNTY EXHIBIT HONORING VETERANS



Douglas County Veterans Service Officer Fred Kuil has created an exhibit to honor veterans.

The exhibit is comprised of many military items he has collected over the years and is displayed on the main floor of the Douglas County Court House in Armour.

Exhibits such as this give insight into the world of veterans.

# WWII VETERANS IN SF RECOGNIZED

SDDVA Secretary Zimmerman had the distinct honor Tuesday to salute four special WW II heroes that live at Prairie Creek Assisted Living Center in Sioux Falls.

He presented each of them with one of South Dakota's WWII coins and thanked them for their great service!



# WWII VETERANS IN SF RECOGNIZED

Yesterday, family and friends gathered in Sioux Falls to honor 37 heroes of the greatest generation.

American Legion Post 15 hosted the award luncheon and SDDVA Secretary Zimmerman provided the address. Secretary Zimmerman and SDDVA staffers Heather Bullerman, Erin Brown, Erin Bultje and Michael Maske, as well as Turner County VSO Tom Sparrow and American Legion State Commander Denny Brenden presented each of the 37 WW II heroes with a South Dakota WWII coin.

Special thanks to all that made this day and this recognition a special one.



# UPCOMING EVENTS

Jul 26—VABHHCS Veterans Town Hall—Post 8 American Legion—Pierre 12:30 pm—2:30 pm (CT)  
Jul 28—Flatlanders Militiamen 6th Annual Poker Run—Shipwreck Bar—Chester—10:00 am—5:00 pm (CT)  
Aug 4—Homecoming for American Legion State Commander Denny Brenden—Ramkota Hotel and Event Center—  
Watertown (1901 9th Avenue SW) - 12:00—4:00 pm (CT)  
Aug 11—Welcome Home Vietnam Veterans Celebration—Mobridge/Pollock Highschool Gym—2:00 pm (CT)  
Aug 15—Sioux Falls VA Show and Shine—2501 W. 22nd Street—5:30—8:00 pm (CT)  
Aug 20-24—SDDVA Benefits School—Ramkota—Pierre  
Aug 24-30—American Legion National Convention—Minneapolis, MN  
Aug 30—Veterans Day at the State Fair  
Sept 1—14th Annual DAV/727th Poker Run—Brookings National Guard Armory (300 5th Street S) - 10:00 am (CT)  
Sept 3—Labor Day (state offices closed)  
Sept 7-9—PVA North Central Chapter Trap Shoot—Crooks Gun Club  
Sept 10—Doug Brown Memorial Pheasant Hunt—Top Gun Hunting Ranch—Howard  
Sept 11—Improving Veterans Care Conference—BHSU (4300 Cheyenne Boulevard) - Rapid City  
Sept 14—VABHHCS VSO Congressional Forum—VFW Post 1273—Rapid City—10:00 am (MT)  
Sept 21—7th Annual POW/MIA Program—Sioux Falls Veterans Memorial Park (1021 W. Bailey Street) 6:30 pm (CT)  
Sept 21—Veterans Stand Down—VFW (3601 S. Minnesota Avenue) - Sioux Falls—9:00 am—2:00 pm (CT)  
Oct 10—SD Veterans Commission Meeting—Soldiers and Sailors Building—Pierre—8:00 am (CT)  
Nov 16—VABHHCS VSO Congressional Forum—Domiciliary Auditorium—Hot Springs —10:00 am (MT)



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